

## SKY AND PURPOSES

I know this is colossal  
I know this is possible  
I know I can do it  
I know I can do it again  
I know I can do it again and again  
I know of a big cloud that is shaped for an elephant  
I know of a little cloud that is shaped for a peanut  
I know of pushing the little cloud over to the big cloud  
I know of putting the peanut onto the elephant's trunk

— Alfred Starr Hamilton

Montclair NJ

## THE LACEMAKER

A girl making lace bends to her task  
with the same look of love Vermeer pored  
over his craft. Her hair springs into bloom  
from the fur of his brush; one strand swirls  
because her fingers have just been twisting it.  
Back to business, her hands spider among the threads,  
drawing nature's symmetry from the spools.

Her dress is yellow. It flows like cream.  
On the left, a plump pillow, ink-blue  
or the black-blue of some Thai sapphires,  
serves no purpose but to oppose this gold  
and concentrate the soft Delft blue of the pad  
beneath the girl's hands, the mid-blue of her smock  
(or is it apron?). A red silk tress runs wild

from the pillow into the foreground,  
small streak of genius. One sees Vermeer  
rummaging his rooms for accent marks  
like this. Although his hands echoed hers,  
curled with care, as he painted the found thing in,  
she could not have wound that red into her work.  
The glints he introduced by chance still shine like  
stars.